

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 STATE 174502

73

ORIGIN ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 INSE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 DEAE-00 SY-05 L-03 H-02 INR-07 SSO-00 INRE-00

/042 R

DRAFTED BY D/HA/ORM:SCLOWMAN:ND

APPROVED BY D/HA:JMWILSON,JR.

D/HA/ORM:JLCARLIN

EA-THAI/BURMA: GROBERTS

EA/VLC: JROSENTHAL

INS/CO - SISENSTEIN

EA/PRCM:MVON BRIESEN

----- 014096

O P 142233Z JUL 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY RANGOON IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI PRIORITY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 174502

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES -- BOAT CASES

REF: (A) STATE 171439, (B) HONG KONG 8118, (C) HONG KONG
8169, (D) RANGOON 2452

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 STATE 174502

1. DEPT IS STILL UNABLE TO PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONS IN CASE OF REFUGEES ON THE BURMESE FREIGHTER OUTSIDE HONG KONG. NOR CAN WE YET PROVIDE GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR HANDLING OF BOAT CASES. NEVERTHELESS, POSTS SHOULD CONTINUE TO REQUEST PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW REFUGEES ON NEWLY ARRIVED BOATS IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE INFORMATION NECESSARY FOR THE DEPT AND INS TO CONSIDER WHICH, IF ANY SUCH REFUGEES EVENTUALLY MAY BE ADMISSIBLE TO THE U.S. IT IS CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT U.S. WILL, AT BEST, ONLY BE ABLE TO TAKE A PART OF THESE REFUGEES.

2. THE PLIGHT OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES WHO ESCAPE BY BOAT AT GREAT HAZARD TO THEIR LIFE, ONLY TO FIND INCREASING RESISTANCE TO THEIR RECEPTION AT PORTS WITHIN A REASONABLE DISTANCE OF THEIR HOMELAND, IS AN EXTREMELY DESPERATE ONE. IN TERMS OF COMPELLING HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATIONS, THERE ARE FEW REFUGEE SITUATIONS TODAY WHICH CAN COMMAND THE SAME DEGREE OF SYMPATHY.

3. OVER THE PAST YEAR, THE INDOCHINESE REFUGEE PROBLEM HAS BEEN SEEN LARGELY AS A PROBLEM FOR A LIMITED NUMBER OF COUNTRIES. OBVIOUSLY, BECAUSE OF OUR COMMITMENTS AND TIES WITH THE INDOCHINESE NATIONS, THE U.S. WAS EXPECTED TO BEAR THE MAJOR BURDEN AND DID SO. SIMILARLY, THE FRENCH HAVE MADE A VERY SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION BECAUSE OF THEIR PREVIOUS RELATIONSHIPS. A MAJOR BURDEN HAS ALSO FALLEN UPON THAILAND AS A SIMPLE MATTER OF GEOGRAPHICAL NECESSITY. AS THE EXPANDED PAROLE PROGRAM NEARS ITS END, BRINGING TO A CLOSE SPECIAL PROGRAMS BY THE U.S. FOR INDOCHINESE REFUGEES, THE PROBLEM, WHICH WILL OBVIOUSLY CONTINUE, MUST NOW BE DEALT WITH ON A MORE INTERNATIONAL BASIS. CERTAINLY, THE UNITED STATES WILL CONTINUE TO ASSIST WHERE POSSIBLE, BUT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CANNOT LONG CONTINUE THE POSTURE OF FORCING THESE REFUGEES FROM PORT TO PORT UNTIL THEY ACCUMULATE ENOUGH REFUSALS TO FINALLY WIN ACCEPTANCE. AT THE SAME TIME, THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES WHO CAN ESCAPE BY SEA WILL PROBABLY REMAIN AT A MANAGEABLE LEVEL FOR THE NATIONS CONCERNED.

4. DRAWING ON ABOVE, GENEVA SHOULD STRONGLY URGE THE UNHCR TO APPEAL ONCE AGAIN FOR ASSISTANCE TO INDOCHINESE REFUGEES WITH A SPECIAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 STATE 174502

EMPHASIS ON INDOCHINESE ESCAPING BY BOAT. MISSION SHOULD PRESS UNHCR TO EXERT MORAL LEADERSHIP AND TO MAXIMUM EXTENT THE PRESTIGE OF HIS OFFICE TOWARD PROVIDING EFFECTIVE INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE IN BEHALF OF THESE REFUGEES, WITH SPECIAL PRIORITY EMPHASIS ON PREVENTING THE REFOULEMENT OF THE REFUGEES. UNHCR REPRESENTATIVES IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN POSTS OR ELSEWHERE WHERE BOATS MIGHT REASONABLY BE EXPECTED TO ARRIVE SHOULD BE INSTRUCTED TO

URGE THE HOST GOVERNMENTS TO ALLOW SUCH REFUGEES WHO REACH THEIR SHORES TO LAND AND TO PROVIDE THEM REASONABLE ASSISTANCE. THE UNHCR SHOULD BE PREPARED TO PROVIDE CARE AND MAINTENANCE TO THESE REFUGEES AND TO SEEK URGENTLY RESETTLEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THEM ELSEWHERE. GENEVA SHOULD ALSO URGE UNHCR TO TAKE STRONG ACTION WITH HKG AND GUB TO PREVENT REFOULEMENT OF REFUGEES ON MV AVA, AND TO IMPRESS UPON HKG AND GUB THAT ACTION ON THEIR PART RESULTING IN REFOULEMENT OF THE REFUGEES WOULD IN ALL LIKELIHOOD BE FOLLOWED BY STRONG CRITICISM IN INTERNATIONAL PRESS SEVERELY DAMAGING TO THE INTERESTS OF THESE GOVERNMENTS.

5. CONSUL GENERAL HONG KONG SHOULD FOLLOW UP UNHCR APPROACH TO HKG TO URGE LATTER TO ALLOW INDOCHINESE REFUGEES TO REMAIN IN HONG KONG AT LEAST UNTIL THE QUESTION OF THEIR ELIGIBILITY FOR RESETTLEMENT ELSEWHERE CAN BE CLARIFIED. WE HOPE HKG WILL FIND IT POSSIBLE TO DISPLAY FLEXIBILITY UNDER PRESENT UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF LARGE NUMBERS OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES WHICH THIRD COUNTRIES HAVE TAKEN FROM HONG KONG. WE NOTE FOR EXAMPLE, THAT MOST INDOCHINESE REFUGEES WOULD BE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR CONDITIONAL ENTRY INTO THE U.S. SINCE VIETNAMESE PREFERENCE QUOTAS NOT FILLED, WAITING TIME MIGHT BE SUBSTANTIALLY LESS THAN FOR CHINESE CONDITIONAL ENTRY APPLICANTS.

6. DEPT. WAS VERY PLEASED TO LEARN THAT UNHCR HAS UNDERTAKEN FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF REFUGEES ON BURMESE VESSEL MV AVA UNTIL PERMANENT RESETTLEMENT CAN BE ARRANGED. WE BELIEVE THIS SHOULD BE ADEQUATE GUARANTEE TO HKG TO ALLOW LANDING OF REFUGEES IN HONG KONG, EVEN IF GUARANTEES ARE NOT PROVIDED BY BURMESE FOREIGN OFFICE THAT REFUGEES NOT RESETTLED ELSELIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 STATE 174502

WHERE WILL BE ACCEPTED BY BURMA.

7. RANGOON SHOULD INFORM GUB THAT MATTER IS ESSENTIALLY ONE ON WHICH THEY SHOULD DEAL DIRECTLY WITH UNHCR. WHILE USG URGENTLY CONSIDERING WHICH, IF ANY, REFUGEES U.S. MIGHT ACCEPT, THIS CLEARLY WILL NOT INCLUDE ALL REFUGEES ON MY AVA. KISSINGER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE174502
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: SCLOWMAN:ND
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760271-0511
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760758/aaaabywl.tel
Line Count: 161
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ORM
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 171439, 76 HONG KONG 8118
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 JAN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 JAN 2004 by morefirh>; APPROVED <06 Jan 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES -- BOAT CASES
TAGS: SREF
To: GENEVA RANGOON
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006